



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Barbara Alby, Acting Member**

**2<sup>nd</sup> District – Sacramento**

Ramon J. Hirsig  
Executive Director  
[www.boe.ca.gov](http://www.boe.ca.gov)

**For Immediate Release  
April 28, 2010**

**Contact: NR 48-10-A  
Anita Gore  
916-327-8988**

## **Ventura County Man Pleads Guilty to Felony Sales Tax Evasion**

The State Board of Equalization (BOE) announced today that Ventura County resident, Peter Joseph Wagner, has pled guilty to four counts of felony sales tax evasion.

The charges were filed by the District Attorney's Office of the Ventura County Major Fraud Unit based on the result of an investigation lead by the BOE, with the assistance of the California Highway Patrol.

Wagner was the manager-in-charge of Team HRCUSA, Inc., doing business as Thousand Oaks Honda/Suzuki in the City of Thousand Oaks, County of Ventura.

Based on the BOE investigation, Wagner intentionally filed fraudulent sales tax returns to understate the actual retail sales amount, evading the payment of sales tax due. For the period of January 1, 2004 to June 30, 2007, Wagner evaded sales tax of \$1,301,726, which he collected from his customers through the sales of motorcycles.

Acting Board of Equalization Member Barbara Alby said, "This is particularly egregious when you consider all of the hard working taxpayers who struggle each day to meet their tax obligations."

California laws impose sales tax on retailers for the privilege of selling tangible personal property at retail in California. Retailers collect sales tax reimbursement from the purchasers and remit all the sales tax collected to the BOE. Retailers are also required to file sales tax return to report to the BOE the actual retail sales amount and the sales tax due for the reporting period.

On April 26, 2010, the court ordered Wagner's sentencing hearing to be set for August 5, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. in Division 14 of the Ventura County Superior Court.

Barbara Alby, of Sacramento, became Acting Board Member for the Second Equalization District in March, 2010. Prior to becoming Acting Member, she served as the Chief Deputy to Second District Board Member Bill Leonard. She also served in the State Assembly from 1993 to 1998, representing the Sacramento area.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$53 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

###